

000 /318 cont./

/footnote 4 cont./ concluded that there had been migrations of postdiluvian groups, without excluding the possibility of pre-diluvian migrations.

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551 2nd -- Indians with Biblical names (see above II - 3);
177 and 3rd -- some episodes of religious fanaticism that took
792 place in the last century on the rivers Içana, Uaupés, and Papurí, with such repercussion that, in spite of the distances, /319/ they managed to worry the ones governing Manaus. Now it is not improbable that such episodes imply a more remote Christian influence.

In 1857 the Governador João Baptista de Figueiredo Tenreiro Aranha heard talk of a great movement of the natives of the river Içana, attracted by a preacher who called himself the "Verdadeiro Cristo" /True Christ/. He then appointed as Missionary of the Içana and Uaupés Padre Romualdo Gonçalves d'Azevedo, "in order to thwart the preachings of the pretended Christ, to calm the agitation promoted and to obstruct the migration of the Indians to another people's territory." It indeed became clear to the Government that the "Christ" was trying to induce the Indians to move to the territory of Venezuela. It was feared that he was a foreign political emissary, perhaps even from England, France, or the United States. It was a matter of a Venezuelan Indian, Venâncio by name, who had settled in the povoação /village, town/ Cuiari, on the confluence of the homonymous river with the Içana, and, in the presence of a cross, he would preach his false doctrine, and the concept of him as Saint would grow. "He took advantage," says the Relatorio of Pe. Romualdo, "of the condition to which he was reduced by attacks of catalepsy, from which he suffered, to make believe that he would die, go to heaven, speak with God; and that he had the power to forgive sins" (Relatório dated February 10, 1858 -- Arquivo do Amazonas of July 23, 1907,

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● 792 Vol. II, n. 5, p. 14). Foreseeing the attacks, he would proclaim beforehand his relations with God, by whose order he would demand payment from the Indians in exchange for the forgiveness of sins. At such news, the forest dwellers would go to see him from wherever they were found. The Missionary Frei Manuel de Santana Salgado, who, at the request of Pe. Romualdo, handicapped by illness, had replaced him, threatening police intervention, forced Venâncio to withdraw to Venezuela. Again during the journey of Frei Salgado another similar religious movement appeared near the "Povoação da Guia" /Town of the Leader/, on the igarapé Pirá-lauára. This time the protagonist was a Brazilian Indian, also named Venâncio, "who called himself Padre Santo enviado do Cristo" /Holy Father sent by Christ/, and "the repetition of such acts took place, and it was there that the public confessions, divorces, and new marriages were made, all this being followed by profane entertainments with dances, eating and drinking, which also was practiced on the Cuiary in /320/ consequence of the teaching of the doctrine and the supposed miracles of the so-called Christ."

In his report dated from Cunury (river Uaupés) on April 12 of 1859, Pe. Romualdo told that Indians of several tribes were gathered in Juquirá-rapecuma, on the Uaupés, "worshipping another Christ who had appeared there, practicing the same that had happened on Igarapé Pirá-lauára, on the Içana, that is, baptizing, marrying, etc., that this gathering numbered over a thousand persons armed with firearms and curabís (arrows with poisoned tips), prepared to resist the officials, in case they went there, as had happened on the Içana, that they would wait right there for the whites."

Indeed, Frei Salgado was received hostilely and had to withdraw in danger of his life on March 3, 1858. "According to what has been reported," proceeds the Relatório, "and is taken as certain, the Christ is an Indian, a native of the Uaupés, who resided in the district of Marabitanas, well known there by everyone, called Alexandre. In the retinue of the Christ," concludes the Relatório (Arquivo do

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177 Amazonas, October 3 of 1907, Vol. II, n. 7, pp. 85-90)
 • 792 "are more than 10 captured Macus, who are used by them
 [567] as slaves, to the point of selling them in exchange for a
 weapon, swords, axes, and whatever pleases them."

After Venâncio and Alexandre, a deserter by the name
 of Basílio Melgueiro renewed the same mistakes, states Koch
 Grünberg (Z. I. 20).

Around the end of 1880 another individual appeared,
 this one from the Arapásu tribe, who called himself Vicente
 Cristo and claimed to maintain dialogues with the spirits of
 the dead and with God himself, of whom he proclaimed him-
 self to be a representative. He announced himself as "Pai
 dos Missionários" /Father of the Missionaries/, who, at his
 request, God had sent to the Caiari. He fanaticized many,
 whom he made dance around a cross. Having harmed many
 seringueiros /rubber workers/ with his fanaticism, he was
 finally arrested in Barcelos.

A similar episode happened in the last decades of the
 past century on the Papuri. An Indian from the Tukano tribe
 (Subdivision of the Sakúro-pōrá, see IV - 2, a), Lino Sêwa by
 name, appeared in the locality of Buxtwá-pweá (today Montfort).
 Natives of the Papuri and even of the Uaupés and Tiquié ran
 to him. He ordered each one to make a cross for himself,
 taught sacred songs, preached that everyone would go to
 heaven, and produced many cures with his remedies. The
 informant for these episodes was an old Indian woman from
 Pari-cachoeira, called Isabel, who completed her report by
 offering that, because she had not practiced fornication, "Saint"
 Lino took her as a helper in the preparation of the remedies.
 Among the extraordinary events Isabel tells of a marvelous
 blossoming of beautiful flowers in the entire region included

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177 between the Papurí and the Tiquié. Some old people who took
• 792 some of the remedies of the "Santo" /saint/ are still living (in 1949). These pilgrimages and cures ended with the death of Lino.

c) Concept of Religion.

121 Religion, in a more rigorous sense, is the theoretical and practical acknowledgement of a Supreme Being, whom we call God, as Sovereign Lord of the whole universe, which is a creation of his.

We take it here in a less rigorous and broader meaning, as belief in beings superior to human beings and different from them, with whom it is possible and expedient to be in communication, and the belief in a future extraterrestrial life different from the one that is led on earth (5).

5. M. Morris Jastrow (The Study of Religion -- New York, 1921 /1901/) reduces to three the constituent elements of Religion: 1st. recognition of one or several powers that do not depend on us; 2nd. feeling of man's dependence in relation to this power or powers; 3rd. possibility of dealing and communicating with these powers. Such a concept is inexact and incomplete. Inexact, since it leads one to confuse Religion with Magic. If this power or potency is something impersonal, like the cosmic force, a relationship and intercourse with it are not possible, and although the human being recognizes it as superior to himself, he does not worship it, he fears it and tries to conquer it and dominate it with particular practices that are called magical. We have, then, Magic.